

Addendum to
Hampton Overseer's House (Hampton Farm House)
537 1/2 St. Francis Road
North of Hampton National Historic Site
Towson
Baltimore County
Maryland

HABS No. MD-226-J
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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. MD-226-J

HAMPTON OVERSEER'S HOUSE

Location: Hampton National Historic Site, north of Hampton Lane, Towson, Baltimore County, Maryland

Present Owner: John Ridgely, Jr. estate

Present Occupant: Mrs. John Ridgely of H.

Present Use: Residence

Statement of Significance: This dwelling, the oldest section of which is thought to date before 1745, was the residence of Captain Charles Ridgely during the construction of Hampton Mansion.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: The tract of land on which the Overseer's House is built was acquired in 1745 by Colonel Charles Ridgely from Clement and Ann Hill. The 1500 acre tract, "Northampton," had been inherited by Ann Hill from her father, Henry Darnall, who had patented it in 1695. Captain Charles Ridgely, Colonel Ridgely's son, inherited the property in 1772 after his father's death. Captain Ridgely, for whom Hampton Mansion was built, died in 1790. In accordance with his will, nephew Charles Ridgely Carnan assumed title to much of the estate and the Ridgely name. On January 17, 1791, widow Rebecca Ridgely signed an agreement with Charles Carnan Ridgely to exchange a tract of land and a house for her rights, claims and interest to Hampton. The estate was inherited by Charles Carnan Ridgely's second son, John, in 1829, as his first son, Charles had died in 1819. After John's death in 1867, the estate was inherited by his son, Charles, who bequeathed it to his son, John, in 1872. The estate was left to John Ridgely, Jr. in 1938, who sold the mansion and an adjoining forty-two acres to the Avalon Foundation in 1946. After the completion of the sale, John Ridgely, Jr. and his wife moved to the Overseer's House across Hampton Lane. John Ridgely, Jr. died in 1959 and his wife, Jane Rodney Ridgely, like all the past Ridgely wives, maintains dower rights to the property. John Ridgely III, is executor.

2. Date of erection: It is traditionally considered that the south section of the house was built before 1745.
 3. Architect: The original architect is unknown. Bavard Trumbell was the architect for the north wing addition of 1947-1948.
 4. Construction information: None known for original construction, though Graham Cranston built the north wing in 1947-1948.
 5. Alterations and additions: It is considered traditionally that a structure was built north of the original structure and was connected to it by what is now the main stair hall when the east wing was constructed probably in the late eighteenth century. After the removal of the cellar vestibule in 1947-1948, a north wing was added to the structure and housed a new kitchen, bedroom and bathroom space. The earlier structure was remodeled. Changes were made to various chimney closets and additional closets were added along with bathrooms.
 6. Important old views: The 1843 plat of the Hampton estate indicates the "Overseers House" with an east wing. The 1936 HABS photographs show the structure prior to the north wing addition.
- B. Historic Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:
See the historical data for Hampton Mansion (HABS No. MD-226-A).
- C. Sources of Information:
1. Primary and unpublished sources: The Ridgely family papers are indexed by Avril J. M. Pedley in The Manuscript Collections of the Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, 1968. Contained are eight collection numbers which list eighty-seven volumes and approximately thirty-five boxes of loose material.
 2. Secondary and published sources: None known

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The story-and-a-half gambrel roof structure with a gable roof east wing has an eight-bay facade and one-bay end elevations. The long elevations of the east wing, which forms a T-shaped plan, have three bays.

2. Condition of the fabric: The house is inhabited and maintained.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The central section of the house is 20'-3" in depth and has a 56'-5½" facade. The east wing addition is 12'-1½" x 28'-4". To the north the modern addition measures 18'-3" in depth and 26'-0" long.
2. Foundations: The foundations are rubble stone masonry.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: The oldest section of the house is of log construction with the various additions being frame. Horizontal white painted clapboarding sheaths the walls. The clapboarding is applied with irregular exposure and bears testimony to later changes in fenestration and other modifications.
4. Structural system: The log walls and wood frame walls support the floor and roof structures.
5. Porches: On the west front facade a modern porch with flagstone steps and wrought iron railings is at the entrance, which has an open gable hood supported on diagonal consoles.

On the east wing, shed roof porches with wood floors extend from the south elevation and the east elevation. The south porch roof is supported on large, equally spaced square columns with plain capitals inset with jig-saw cut balustrading. Flagstone steps descend to grade from the porch, which infills the angle between the wing and the original structure of the house. The roof of the east porch is supported on three thin, square columns without capitals. The columns are infilled with plain railings which extend down the wooden steps and terminate at square newels. The top rail is capped with a board which extends over the end grain of the newels. The porch was latticed. A modern porch and steps are located at the east doorway to the north wing.

A gable roofed, rubble stone masonry cellar vestibule extended from the north chimney before the north wing was added in 1947-1948. It had a board and batten door and jig-saw cut fascia boards at the eaves and verges.

6. Chimneys: Chimneys are located at the end elevations of each major room. Typically, they are stone below the

roof line and brick above the roof line. The early north structure's chimney projected through the walling at the first floor as shown in the 1936 HABS photograph. On the chimney of the original structure there is a two-course corbeled cap similar to the stack of the east wing's taller chimney, which has its back exposed at the first floor level.

7. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: The west entrance doorway, which is hung with a six-panel door, has plain trim and two sidelights with two-over-two light sash in each. The clapboarding is continuous under the sidelights and extends over the head of the door and sidelights. The south porch door of the east wing and the basement door of the north wing have nine lights over two panels. At the present kitchen a twenty-four light, two-panel door fills the opening. A board and batten door with narrow boards opens onto the east wing porch, two steps below the main floor level. A 1936 HABS photograph of the east elevation of the older structure indicates that there was an outside doorway opening into the early north structure first floor room.
- b. Windows and shutters: The original section of the house has six-over-six light sash in the first and second floor openings, which are typically trimmed at the clapboarding with plain boards and unmoulded sills. At the first floor of the early north structure and the connecting unit there are twelve-over-twelve light sash, which were imitated with slightly different proportioned twelve-over-twelve light sash at the modern north wing first floor. Six-over-six light sash fill the first floor openings of the east wing, which has three-over-three light sash at its attic windows, located under the eaves. Four-light casement windows flank the chimney breast at the east gable end and were matched at the modern north wing gable end. The dormers have six-over-six light sash and two- and three-light sash are at the basement window openings.

All the window openings in the clapboard walls, except the smaller three-over-three light sash of the east wing and the casements, have pairs of two-panel shutters hung at the jambs.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape and covering: The original structure has a gambrel roof with the ridge extending east and west. The early north structure's gambrel roof ridge is higher and runs north and south. At the juncture of the upper slopes of the gambrels, the north roof is truncated. The east wing has a gabled roof the height of the lower slope of the gambrel roof of the early north structure and extends into the gable of the original structure. The modern north wing has a gambrel roof which is not contiguous with the early north structure's roof. Typically, the roofs are slate shingled, though the shed roof porches have sheet metal coverings.
- b. Cornice and eaves: The eaves are boxed and have small crown and bed mouldings. Barge boards extend up the rakes of the gable ends.
- c. Dormers: Located over each first floor opening of the original structure and the modern addition are dormers having shed roofs, extensions of the upper slope of the gambrel roofs. The dormers have plain board trim, six-over-six light sash, and flush board cheeks applied parallel to the lower roof slopes.
- d. Cupola: A bell cupola is located on the ridge of the early north structure's roof. The cupola has a square, battered drum, which has slate shingles, and has wood corner posts, horizontally braced near the top of the drum, which support a gabled roof with a board ceiling. The bell and its rope wheel are operated from the small first floor room opening off the main stair hall.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: The basement area under the original section of the house is unexcavated. The area under the early north structure has one space with a large vault at the north which supports the chimney structure. The original entrance to the basement was through the chimney vault. An irregularly shaped room is under the connecting unit and has a natural rock outcropping in the floor. A single room extends under the east wing.

The space under the east porch is enclosed. The modern north wing basement area is a single space and has an outside east entrance.

- b. First floor: The basement space allocation is generally repeated at the first floor, though at the main west entrance in the connecting unit an ell-shaped stair hall wraps around a small room. The modern kitchen wing is divided into two major spaces and a toilet room. Originally, the kitchen was located in the east wing.
 - c. Second floor: At the second floor the plan is similar, though the main stairway is separated from two rooms in the connecting unit. The east wing is divided into three rooms and has no direct access into the second floor of the central structure. The modern north wing has two spaces divided by a bathroom and a service stairway.
2. Stairways: The main stairway, which is in an open well, rises in a straight run from the stair hall and winds 90° near the second floor landing. It has a plain square newel and balusters and a simply moulded handrail. The enclosed stairway beside the chimney breast in the original section of the house winds 180° to the second floor where the well is also enclosed. In the east wing an enclosed stairwell with winders turning 90° ascends to an open stairwell at the second floor. An original winder stairway was removed from beside the chimney breast in the large room of the early north addition. Modern stairways with winders provide access to the basement and the second floor from the first floor of the north wing.
 3. Flooring: Throughout the house the flooring appears to be original to each addition with the pine floor boards varying from 5" to 12" in width. Changes in flooring in the early north structure indicate alterations. Typically the first and second floor hearths of the central section are brick. The east wing, which does not have a second floor firebox, has a concrete hearth at the first floor. In the basement, the modern north wing floor is concrete and the floors of the older sections are compacted earth.
 4. Wall and ceiling finish: The basement spaces have exposed rubble stone walls and exposed floor structure at the ceilings. Elsewhere in the house, the walls and ceilings are plastered.

5. Doorways and doors: The interior doors are simply trimmed with backband moulding and are typically hung with paneled doors. The chimney closet and former stairway door in the large room of the early north structure at the first floor has segmentally arched door heads. The four-panel doors have arched top panels and top rails. The rooms of the original log structure have two-panel doors as does the closet under the main stairway and the second floor room of the early north structure's chimney closet and former stairwell door. Elsewhere, including the modern north wing, there are standard six-panel doors. Board and batten doors are at the various secondary openings, particularly in the rooms of the east wing.
 6. Special decorative features: In addition to the segmentally arched door heads in the first floor room of the early north structure, the window reveals, which are similarly trimmed, have segmentally arched heads. Plain chimney pieces with fascia and backband trim are at the fireplaces.
 7. Hardware: Though a cooking crane exists in the first floor room of the east wing, the existing hardware are modern reproductions.
 8. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Lighting: A modern electrical system was installed in 1947-1948.
 - b. Heating: A hot water central heating system was installed in 1947-1948.
- D. Site and Surroundings:
1. General setting: The Overseer's House is located on a rise above the run of the spring nearly on axis with the north facade of Hampton Mansion (HABS No. MD-226-A), though the main facade of the Overseer's House faces west towards the private lane which extends north through the property.
 2. Historic landscape design: The front yard area is enclosed by a picket fence which extends from the northwest corner of the house to a garage driveway, along the driveway to the private lane, along the private lane where it turns across the property and angles back to the house approximately to the southeast corner of the original structure. The lawn within the fence is main-

tained and contains several cast iron settees and large trees. Large yews are used for foundation plantings. The yard is generally untended between the east wing and the Hampton Quarters (HABS No. MD-226-K-L-M).

3. Outbuildings: Immediately adjacent to and north and east of the Overseer's House are the three Quarters structures which are oriented to the house and form the east courtyard. A twentieth century garage structure is located to the northwest of the house. The Mule Barn (HABS No. MD-226-O) and the Corn Crib (HABS No. MD-226-N) are located west of the house across the private lane. The 1843 plat of the estate indicates that the Overseer's House originally had several small auxiliary outbuildings to the north and east. Included were a "Root House," an "Ash House," a "Hen House," and a "Meat House."

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was initially financed with funds from the "Mission 66" Program of the National Park Service under the direction of Charles E. Peterson, Supervising Architect, Historic Structures. Hampton Mansion was measured in 1958 by Student Assistant Architects Orville W. Carroll (University of Oregon), Harold A. Nelson (University of Michigan), and Trevor Nelson (M.I.T.), with Professor Lee H. Nelson (University of Illinois) as Project Supervisor. The complex was measured and drawn in 1959 by Student Assistant Architects Charles C. Boldrick (University of Notre Dame), Richard C. Mehring (University of Virginia) and Herbert L. Banks (University of Florida), with Professor F. Blair Reeves (University of Florida) as Project Supervisor.

The project was edited in 1972-73 by Rodd L. Wheaton, Architect, Historic American Buildings Survey, who prepared the historical data, edited and expanded the 1959 architectural data and recorded several structures which were previously unrecorded.